1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
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622 kingdoms or *garhs* of forgotten chiefs, or divisions of the early
623 medieval Telanga kingdoms of Barsur, Dantewara or Bhairamgarh.
632 The Marias there are perhaps later arrivals, spread over a land once ruled by comparatively civilized and organized Telanga princes. There are *pargana* headmen, with wide influence and authority; but their authority possibly does not derive in the same sense from the clan, and may have been conferred in the not very distant past by the State because of the obvious advantages of having such central intermediaries between the State and the tribes. They have to deal with villages of many different clans, and far larger villages at that than those of the Hill Marias. These villages are still throwing off new *para* or hamlets, which often become bigger than the parent village, and soon for practical reasons have to have their own *peda* and *perma*, though these will be called the *chudala*, or small, in contrast to the *birya*, or big, *peda* and *perma* of the parent village. Among the Bison-horn Marias, therefore, it is natural to find the village *panchayat* exercising a more real authority and greater independence of the *pargana* headman and *panchayat* than among the Hill Marias. Nevertheless the formal recognition under the recent State orders of the *pargana* headman and his *panchayat* as a court of appeal from the judicial decisions of the village elders is bound to strengthen his position. The Bison-horn Maria has always been more in contact with and more ready to learn from the outside world than the Hill Maria, and there are many village and *pargana* headmen who show real leadership and force of character.

689 Social offences involving exclusion from tribal ceremonies and
564 feasts are very similar in these days to those of neighbouring Hindu
684 castes. The worst offences are to get maggots in wounds, to take
688 food from or have sexual relations with persons of the despised Ghasia, Mahra or Lohar castes, and to break the rules of exogamy by having sexual relations with a girl of a brother-clan. Another offence, which among the Bison-horn Marias may lead to considerable trouble, is the eating of any new crop or the cutting of grass or bamboo before the appropriate *pandum* has been celebrated; this form of sacrilege is believed to be avenged by the earth or clan-god sending tigers to carry off cattle or men, and in a case which came before me in which such a visitation had followed the cutting of grass by two villagers before the Kare Pandum the *panchayat* had ordered them to compensate the owner of each cow or bullock killed by the avenging tigers. The way in which breaches of the rules of exogamy are dealt with has already been described
689 (pages 245-6 above). Any form of social relations with Ghasia,
564 Mahra or Lohar, however unwitting, entails penalties not only
783 on the actual offender, but also often on his near kinsmen. In the

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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1913 case (see page 283 above) in which two Hill Marias murdered a Maria Lohar girl with whom they had been cohabiting, their parents and brothers all had to be purified by the *pargana* headman, and the actual murderers were purified by him a year after the murder; one of the main reasons for the villagers hushing up the crime was the belief that greater harm might have resulted to the clan if the Lohar girl had borne a child to the murderers than from them killing her. In 1926, Oyami Masa of Malhanar in the Kutru Mar hill *pargana*, an orphan boy six years old, was outcasted for taking some food from a Ghasia who was spending the night in the village *hos-gotul*[1] (strangers' rest-house) and found the child half-starved. As soon as the villagers heard of this they regarded him as outcasted. They realized, however, that he could not be expected to pay the expenses of the purification ceremony, and as they themselves had had poor harvests and were not in a position to meet the cost just then, they built a hut for the child at some distance from the rest of the village, and there he had to live for two years, till they could pay to purify him; meanwhile they provided food for him, leaving it for him at some distance from his hut. After two years had elapsed they subscribed eight annas cash as remuneration to Arki Burga of Jegur, the *Sendhia*, ten *pali* of rice and a *pali* of pulse, and invited the *Sendhia* to come and purify the boy. The men of the neighbouring villages of the clan were also asked to attend. At the bidding of the *Sendhia* the villagers built seven small huts in a row, and the boy had to pass through each in turn, each being burnt down as soon as he had passed through it. The *Sendhia* himself then shaved the whole of the boy's head, including even his crown-tuft. This done, the boy was taken to the river, made to bathe thrice and brought back to the village, where the *Sendhia* burnt his tongue with a *karra* (*Odsa marra*) twig, made him drink a little from a cup of milk into which he had dipped a piece of gold, and sprinkled the rest of the milk over the boy and the onlookers. The boy then fetched water, and in this the *Sendhia* boiled the rice and pulses, and served the cooked food to the boy and all the clansmen present. This incident typifies the way in which Marias combine to relieve each other's difficulties. The postponement of the caste feast until the offender has had time to collect all that is necessary is almost a rule of tribal life, and one that might with advantage be copied by the pharasaical elders of Hindu castes in British India. The social offence may offend the clan-god, and so its expiation is the concern of the whole clan, which therefore must help the offender gradually to raise the cost of the expiation ceremonies.

[1] See page 196 above.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

yet among the Ao, where the *morung* plays an important part, quarrels between father and son are rare.

Muria parents are tolerant and understanding. 'Whenever we hear the music of a drum', said a boy at Kabonga, 'we feel restless; we leave everything we are doing and go at once to dance and sing.' Here I was told a story, that is often repeated, of a boy who was sowing seed in his father's field. He had a whole measure of rice to sow, but when he heard drums beating in a neighbouring village he forgot all about it and went off to join the dance, leaving the pile of rice on the ground. Three days later he returned expecting to be beaten, but his father had understood the boy's feelings and had himself gone to the field and sown the rice instead. I have been told in various villages that for recognized festivals and marriages, parents are very sympathetic to their children.

[689] And indeed if the parents interfere with the life and discipline of the ghotul, if they stop their children going to it without sufficient excuse, they are fined—and so firmly established is the institution that they pay up.

There is very generally a convention that the parents know nothing of what happens in the ghotul. They are not even supposed to know their children's titles though, of course, they actually know everything that goes on. But the conventions must be observed. The children do not sing ghotul songs at home. A girl should not let her parents see her as she goes out to the ghotul or when she comes back. That is one reason why she returns home very early in the morning. She ought to be at work husking rice or cleaning the house when her parents get up. Should a girl meet her father as she is going to the ghotul, she should turn her head aside and walk away as quickly as possible. They should not greet or say anything to each other. But in some villages, in Kabonga for example, and at Jhakri, the older people have told me that when a girl gets engaged, her mother advises her to be very careful about allowing boys to take liberties with her. It is said, however, that the parents never warn a girl or boy against any particular person. At Jhakri, Raunu said that the mother says to the daughter at this time, 'Don't play and laugh too much with the boys; be happy, but don't let your hands and feet get into trouble. I never got into trouble nor did your grandmother; we were always known to be good girls for we never became pregnant. Never run away with a boy but marry the one we choose for you and don't quarrel with your girl friends.' So also a father advises his son to be very careful in his relations with girls who are already engaged to other boys. The reasons for this attitude are purely financial: 'Don't make a girl pregnant. We are poor people; I shall not be able to pay the fine; if you get into mischief you will have to go and work as someone's servant and pay the fine that way. Be happy but don't always run after the same girl.'

It will be seen that this kind of advice is very practical, and for that reason the boys and girls do not resent it. The parents are not concerned with the 'morals' of their children and, indeed, even when a boy makes a girl pregnant the parents generally stand by him and help him. When I asked a chelik at Markabera whether his parents ever got angry with him for sexual indulgence in the ghotul, he replied, 'Why should they, didn't they do the same when they were young?'

It is not easy to obtain information about the mother-son relationship. I have not heard of any 'possessive' mothers and the general circumstances of Muria life are such as to eliminate the dangers of the mother-fixation. Naturally, mothers tend to spoil their sons and fathers their daughters. 'A boy may be frightened of his father but he is never afraid of his mother. If